

DSU democracy: use it or lose it

Do you know that you have a Student Union? Do you know that you have councillors that are elected to represent you on the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) Council?

Well, let me tell you about it.

You see, the DSU Council is made up of more than just the DSU Executive. There are over 40 council seats in all, representing the various groups from around the school. These positions were designed to make council more accountable and accessible to the average student who doesn't have the time nor the energy to be constantly involved with the workings of student government. They were also created to represent a more pluralistic perspective, so that the needs of more students could be both heard and dealt with.

Now, you might wonder if this is truly the case at the present

time, and to that I would tell you: "NO!"

I hate the fact that I have to write this article every year, but you've got a collection of dough-heads for councillors and if you don't watch them, they'll take you for a fucking ride. You see, half of these jokers only sit on council because they think that it will look good on their resumé. They don't take it seriously, and most of those people would say, "Oh, isn't that nice." The thing about democracy is, if you don't use it, you **will** lose it. If you think that you deserve to be taken advantage of, please, take no heed of this article. But, if there is something inside of you that makes you want to know that you're not being taken advantage of, ask a few questions. You would probably be surprised by the answers you get.

You can't even begin to imagine the number of councillors at the border line of being thrown off council for non-attendance. These people work for you and you're not getting your money's worth. When we actually get quorum, the few councillors that are there have so little

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understanding of what is going on, that the executive could get away with robbing the Union blind, and most of those people would say, "Oh, isn't that nice."

Hell, I'm a councillor, and even I don't fully know what's going on in the DSU, but at least

I'm asking questions. Hell, I think I may be asking questions that people don't want to answer, if I can use the reactions of a certain executive member as a guide.

You see, last week in council, I asked a question, as put to me by a member of the DALHOUSIE student body, and that executive member told me that none of you would ever ask that question. Perhaps there is something the executive doesn't want me to find out about.

But then again, maybe I'm just paranoid, maybe they all have the best interests of their fellow students at heart, maybe

they're saving the world, or maybe, just maybe, they're lining their pockets. Who knows? I certainly don't, but I'll do my damndest to find out. And so should all of you, or, at the very least, make sure that your representatives are doing their job of doing it for you.

I'm telling you that if you don't watch what your paid officials are doing, they will inevitably end up doing something bad. And in that scenario, you'll have no-one to blame but yourself. So be vigilant. Ask a few questions, and don't be afraid to ruffle a few feathers.

JOSEF TRATNIK

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Metro Transit — the Ralph Cramden experience

As a suburbanite of the metro area, I frequently require the hasty services of a petroleum-fuelled chariot to get me to and from Dalhousie. Well, obviously my first choice is to take the leader in urban transportation, Metro Transit.

For a small fee of \$1.30, Metro Transit guarantees an entertaining ride that will take you to any point of interest in the Halifax area. As the bus travels as fast as a combine through an apple orchard, many people amuse themselves in a variety of ways. The most popular method is reading, which I find extremely difficult since the bus constantly shakes violently. Reading on the bus is like trying to perform a vasectomy on a roller coaster.

In my mind, the bus driver is a doctor. Those men (and the odd woman) carry the lives of hundreds in their skilful hands every day as they maneuver their bus like a surgeon's scalpel. Clad in their navy blue blazer and grey slacks, they are the spinal chord of our scattered city. Consequently, if you spend six hours a day on a bus like myself,

you really appreciate their work and you also own the key to unlock the problem to urban transportation, a Metro Transit bus pass. This forty dollar investment enables me to travel first class for one month, aboard any Metro transit bus (or ferry, for those commuters just across the harbour).

Occasionally, a crafty wrongdoer will attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of an experienced bus driver by handing him an expired bus transfer ticket. The criminal is promptly thrown to the floor of the bus, given a swift kick to the jaw and then tossed off the bus for this sinful act. It has been proven over and over again that no one can take Metro Transit for a free ride.

Nevertheless, I wish there weren't as many stops along the routes. Metro Transit has mastered transforming a ten-minute car ride into a burdensome hour-long excursion. If you are one of the elite class that depends on a bus to commence and to conclude your school day, have a fun ride.

L. FRY

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TRAVEL CUTS GIVES MAJOR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS... FREE FLIGHTS HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Travel Cuts recently announced the winner of its Free Flight Home for the Holidays contest, and the winner is **Bruce Campbell**. Thanks to Travel CUTS, Bruce will be flying to **Paris** with \$500 worth of FREE AIRFARE.

The contest was part of Travel CUTS' *Christmas Comes Early* campaign. Christmas being the busiest travel period there is Travel CUTS organised the campaign to encourage people to book early, before fares increased and flights sold out. Over 35 Travel CUTS offices from across Canada gave away free flights as an added incentive for students to book early.

As a result of the campaign, 1,817 people from across Canada booked flights early and entered the contest. According to Travel CUTS sales figures, the average person entering the contest booked a seat at 60% off the cost of a regular economy ticket. This equated into an accumulated savings of \$1,011,086.

Our *Christmas Comes Early* campaign has been a huge success, "says Travel CUTS Manager Joanne Long. "By booking early, students are guaranteed the best fares and departure dates available."

If you haven't booked your flight home for the holidays, Joanne Long suggests you visit Travel CUTS today. "I'm sending out one last plea to procrastinators on campus," says Joanne. "There are still seats available, but you need to book now. I'd hate to see anybody not make it home for the holidays because they left it too late."

Travel CUTS is located at the 3rd Floor, Student Union Building, Dalhousie University. For more information call 494-2054

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